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SENDING THE SPARROWS TO POT

SINCE the insidious advice was given by THE ART WORLD how to rid oneself of sparrows, the topic has commended itself to many newspapers and an avalanche of letters from correspondents is the result. A proposal has been made that the Boy Scouts be authorized to wage war on these hardy perennials, to which is opposed the conjecture that the Boy Scouts, being boys, can scarcely be expected to hold their devastating hands when it is a chippy bird, cheewink, thrush or song-sparrow they see before them. To poison them and to destroy their nests are steps a good many persons hesitate to take, while as to shooting them, the process is costly, noisy and certain to drive away other birds, the very birds that most people want to see and hear round and about.

So far as we can tell the sparrow has had little honor in the past. We call it English and are not grateful for the gift of a birdlet that snips off buds, eats the grain, pecks and ruins fruit and is all too merciful to grub and caterpillar. The British call it the German sparrow and class it among various objectionable things beside the Georges that have been wished upon them by the Germans. In their turn the Germans have a tradition that does not lack likelihood, how the sparrow came to them in the Middle Ages from Hungary and Poland, thus suggesting comparisons with Gipsies and the pest. It remains to be seen whether the Russians accuse Siberia beyond Lake Baikal and the Siberians indict the Chinese and the Chinese implicate the Japanese—enough, that like influenza this feathery tough appears to send his colonies round the world to divert and annoy the whole of humankind.

One disputant, Mr. J. E. Dumars, has come to the rescue, maintaining that sparrows when feeding their squabs consume great quantities of insects, including the gipsy moth, and in winter destroy the seeds of weeds and thus help to keep the lawns. But his testimony is offset by that of many others who accuse the self-confessed slayer of cock robin, not merely of pugnaciousness, the ruin of the nests of other birds and the killing of nestlings but of being a spoiler of fruit and pilferer of grain.

Most of these correspondents appear to miss the point. Granted that the sparrow and starling are undesirable immigrants, what are we to do with them? As Sydney Smith with serious face to the economist who anxiously asked "What shall we do with our raw materials?" answered boldly: "Cook 'em," so we say to those who grumble at sparrow and starling: "Trap 'em, fat 'em, eat 'em!"

This is better tactics than the war of extermination suggested by Mr. Shields, President of the League of American Sportsmen, since, instead of appealing to a few reformers, whose labor would have to be paid for and their energies confined to a few places, it enlists young and old in the primeval game of hunting for food. In the Bronx it is almost impossible, despite the law, to save any birds from the ravages of the immigrant Italian. Let the news once get a start that sparrow pie is as good as robin pie, and the result is certain. The balance will be re-established, the sparrow put in his place, viz., the pie, and the native song-birds will be relieved of a worse enemy than cats.

THE MEDAL AND PORTRAIT OF JOHN BURROUGHS

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THE American Academy of Arts and Letters voted the medal of the Academy for excellence in belles-lettres to John Burroughs, one of whose delightful essays on the wild creatures of the woods and waters and the air appears in this number of the magazine. The medal is designed by A. A. Weinman and we show it for the benefit of those who have not seen it before. The quotation from Aristotle which forms the title of the essay has a deprecatory sound as if the writer in a fit of modesty had been thinking that the lowly creatures about which he gossips might seem to some readers scarcely worthy of an essayist's pen and so he would call upon the great Stageirite philosopher to back

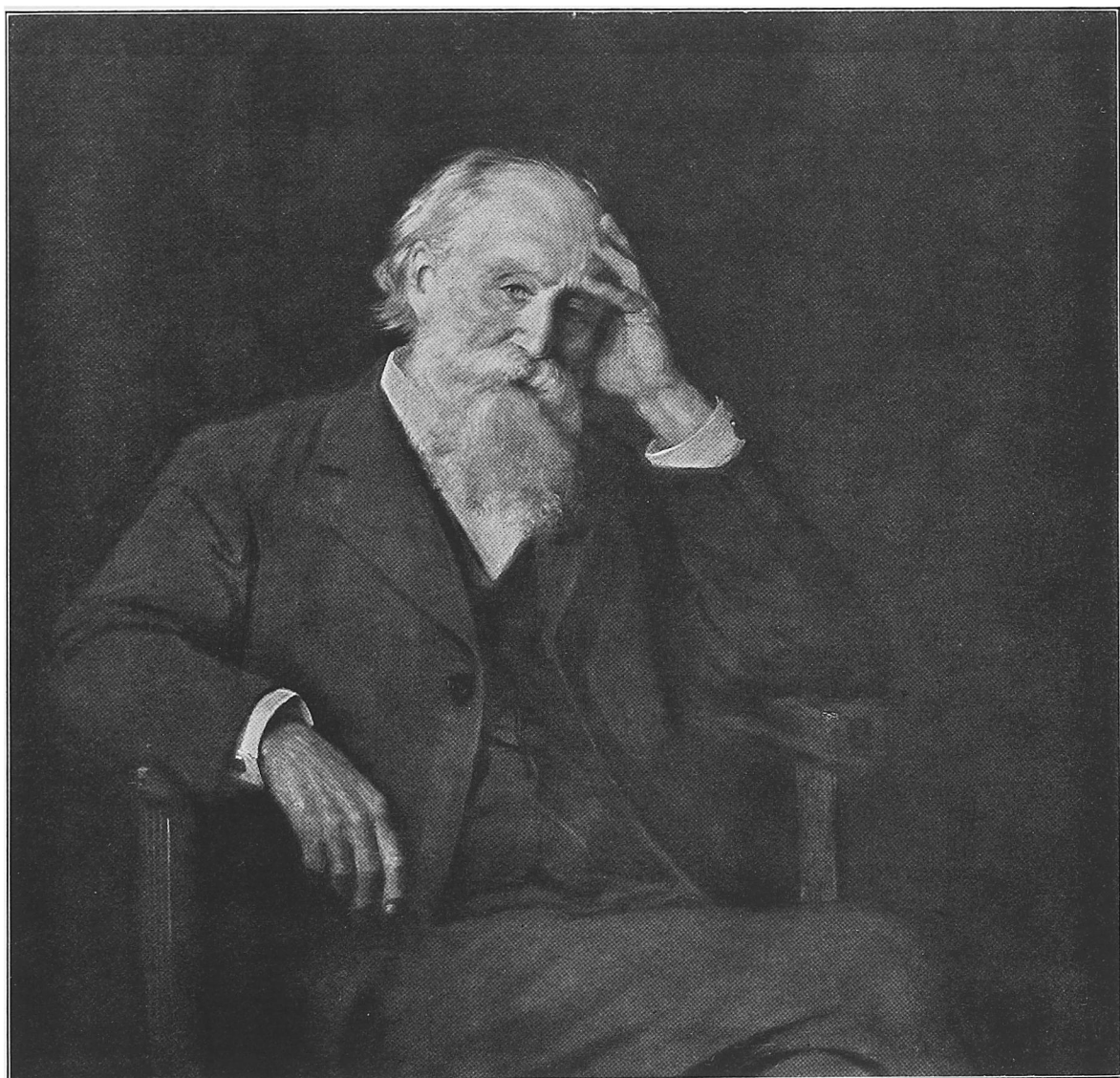
him up in the statement that Nature lives in the meanest and commonest and smallest of forms as well as in those we hold large and noble. Surely this modern is a worthy successor of John D. Godwin who wrote "Rambles of a Naturalist" some ninety years ago and akin to Hudson who tells us about the birds, beasts and insects of the pampas of the Argentine to-day!

The painter Orlando Rouland has made a capital likeness of Mr. Burroughs, full of distinction, and reflecting the thoughtful character of the man. We are sure our readers will be glad to see a reproduction of this portrait, which is given on page 258 of the magazine.

THE ART WORLD TAKES OVER "THE CRAFTSMAN"

IT may please our readers to learn that THE ART WORLD has incorporated with this magazine THE CRAFTSMAN, a monthly founded by Mr. Gustave Stickley, but now for a number of years in other hands. At first THE CRAFTSMAN confined itself to

the industrial arts, later it widened its scope. We shall offer our old subscribers who are interested in arts and crafts such papers and articles as meet their taste and at the same time satisfy the requirements of the subscribers to THE CRAFTSMAN.



JOHN BURROUGHS. FROM A PAINTING BY ORLANDO ROULAND

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MEDAL TO JOHN BURROUGHS, JOINT MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY AND NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND LETTERS IN NOVEMBER

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